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Title: Regarding fixation of price for sugarcane in Karnataka.

SHRI MANJUNATH KUNNUR (DHARWAD SOUTH): Madam, this is relating to support price for sugarcane and special package for the Sangur Sugar Factory in Haveri District of Karnataka.

Sugarcane was being purchased at Rs.1200 per metric tonne last year in Karnataka. This year, the price is only Rs.900 per metric tonne. The sugar factory owners are not prepared to pay more in Karnataka. In fact, the price has to be fixed after calculating all the expenditure on inputs like water, manure, fertilizer, pesticides, labour etc. It should be done scientifically.

Strangely, in Maharashtra, the mill-owners are purchasing sugarcane at the rate of Rs.1500 per metric tonne as the Mills get Central financial assistance. This has led to agitation in Haveri, Belgaum, Bagalkot and Bijapura districts and in other places. There are demonstrations asking for remunerative prices for sugarcane. The sugarcane growers are demanding support price. So far, there is no response from the Centre in this regard.

I, therefore, urge upon the Centre to look into the matter seriously and to come to the rescue of the farmers − the sugarcane growers − by intervening in this matter to help them to get at least Rs.1400 per metric tonne of sugarcane. I hope and trust, the Centre will take immediate steps before it is too late.

The Sangur Sugar Factory belongs to my Parliamentary constituency in Haveri District, Karnataka. The farmers have gown about three-and-a-half lakh tones of sugarcane in that area. Last year, Sri Renuka Sugars Limited has paid Rs.1200 per metric tonne along with Rs.80 for cutting of sugarcane from the field. There is an agreement between Sri Renuka Sugars and the Sangur Sugar Factory to pay Rs.3 crore to the factory every year and to run it for three years. This year, there is a breach of contract by Sri Renuka Sugars and they have not paid the salary of 680 employees since June 2006. They have not paid Rs.3 crore to the Sangur Sugar Factory as agreed and not started the factory.

MADAM CHAIRMAN : What are you demanding now?

SHRI MANJUNATH KUNNUR : I only demand that this factory should be started immediately and a special package should be given by the Centre. Therefore, the farmers have not come forward for crushing of sugarcane. The sugarcane growers have become more upset. Under such circumstances, the special package may please be given to the Sangur Sugar Factory to start the same immediately so as to save the farmers' life. It has become very difficult for the sugarcane growers.

Therefore, I urge upon the Government of India to interfere in the matter and give special package for such sick industries. For the Sangur Sugar Factory, relief may also please be given immediately.